

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Holiday Inn, Fargo & Virtual
August 5 - 6, 2021

Call to Order: Called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Angie Bosch, Drew Hanson, Shannon Cook, Jared Ferguson, Nancy Lunden, LaRae Gustafson, Bill Willis, Russ Cusack, Ben Johnson, Gillian Plenty Chief, Brenda Boehler

Members Absent: Deb Unruh, Matthew White

Non-Council Members Present: Aimee Volk, Royce Schultze, Scott Burlingame, Leon Dietrich, Beth Larson-Steckler, Damian Schlenger, Brittney Hogan

Approval of May 2021 Minutes: Nancy Lunden made a motion to approve the May 2021 SILC minutes, Jared Ferguson seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Approval of the August 2021 Agenda: Gillian Plenty Chief made a motion to approve the agenda with amendments (meeting dates which should be 2022 not 2021), Shannon Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Correspondence – Russ Cusack: None

Treasurer's Report – Bill Willis: Reviewed the Treasurer's Report. The report is only through May 2021.

Bill talked about the upcoming APRIL Conference being held virtually October 18-22, 2021. The registration is \$200 per person. There are funds available. Please let Aimee know if you are interested in attending so she can get you registered.

Bill also talked about the SILC Congress which will be February 28th – March 2nd, 2022, which is being held in San Diego, CA (may be subject to change due to the pandemic). We have budgeted for two people to attend. The registration cost has not yet been determined. Please submit your name if you are interested to Aimee and Russ by September 10, 2021.

Drew Hanson made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and Nancy Lunden seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Russ Cusack made a motion for anyone that wants to attend the APRIL Conference to attend. Drew Hanson seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Ben Johnson made a motion for two people to attend the SILC Congress in 2022. Drew Hanson seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Legislative Updates – Josh Boschee

Josh Boschee is a Representative of the House of North Dakota, represents district 44 in Fargo. He discussed several bills that recently passed in the legislature. He had a discussion asking how they [state/county] can assist as well as discussed barriers.

Schedule 2022 SILC Meetings – Gillian Plenty Chief

Discussed Wednesday – Thursday meeting dates vs. Thursday – Friday meeting dates. Discussed keeping them a hybrid style for the upcoming year.

Thursday-Friday

- February 3-4, 2022 – Bismarck
- May 5-6, 2022 – Grand Forks
- August 4-5, 2022 – Fargo
- November 3-4, 2022 – Minot

LaRae Gustafson made a motion to approve the dates above for the SILC 2022 meetings and Nancy Lundon seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

State General Funding Update – Scott Burlingame

Scott discussed how we can tell a story to make an impact, so we do not lose funding. We discussed ideas on how to get the story out there.

- Having each CIL have advocates that can get out in front of legislature.
- Have SILC members trained on being an advocate so they can talk to local legislature since we have statewide representation.
- Have a video option for testimony.
- Must continuously talk to the legislators so we build rapport, they understand who we are, what we do, etc.
- Sending Newsletters from the CILs and SILC to local legislators.
- Having a legislator invited to every SILC meeting.
- Inviting people from hospitals, nursing home, churches, etc.
- Educating hospitals and other facilities.
- Creating a brochure about independent living and SILC
- Pay-per-click options for CILs

Panel Discussion – Freedom Resource Center -

Cancelled

Committee Breakout

Friday, August 6, 2021

Call to Order: Russ Cusack called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. A quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Shannon Cook, LaRae Gustafson, Bill Willis, Angie Bosch, Nancy London, Drew Hanson, Gillian Plenty Chief, Ben Johnson, Brenda Boehler

Members Absent: Deb Unruh, Matthew White, Russ Cusack

Non-Committee Members: Aimee Volk, Scott Burlingame, Royce Schultze, Beth Larson-Steckler, Royce Schultze, Leon Dietrich, Damian Schlinger, Bill Grommesh, Kelly Buhr

Quarterly Director's Report:

Randy for Options: See attached.

Dakota Center for Independent Living: See attached

Scott for Independence, Inc.: See attached.

Angie for Freedom: See attached.

Hope Inc. – Bill Grommesh and Kelly Buhr

This is an adaptive sports program for those with all disabilities. They have several adaptive programs skiing, track, curling, baseball, basketball, hockey, fashion shows, theatre program, fishing, women's group, etc. Hope Inc. was founded in 1992. The Grommesh's took over HOPE, INC. in 2006 and have made it much bigger. They started with five kids and developed and implemented a year-round adaptive sports and recreation program. They now have 170 individuals that participate in the program.

They serve children and adults with mobility challenges. They do not need to use a wheelchair, walker, or crutches to participate. Just need to have gross motor problems in their legs to qualify and they are family-centered and encourage siblings, parents, extended family, and friends to participate.

They have weekly activities such as: sled hockey, downhill skiing, baseball, softball, curling, bowling, dance line, track, etc. They hold yearly activities such as a fashion show, theatre show, etc.

Committee Reports:

Governance – Royce Schultze:

Regarding membership the SILC needs to find someone for Quadrant 3 and Quadrant 2. Shannon Cook in Quadrant I will need a member as her second term is up March 31,

2022. Bill Willis is also terming out as of March 31, 2022, as a Rep of a State Agency. Bill sent an announcement out to his department looking for a replacement.

The SILC application was updated to reflect the information on the new Boards website was updated <https://apps.nd.gov/gov/boards/>

Internal Affairs – Nancy Lundon: See Grid

They updated and revised the SILC application to be more accurate of the new Boards and Commissions website.

Jared Ferguson made a motion to accept the updated SILC application and LaRae Gustafson seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous decision.

External Affairs – Drew Hanson: See Grid

State Rehabilitation Council – Russ Cusack: No report.

There is a tax incentive that was approved in the last legislative session. In the last month they have signed up eight employers which is great. They are looking at developing social media for VR. Looking at what the current levels of financial participation. They will be hiring for an assistant director as well as a regional administrator in Dickinson. They will be working on the Triennial Needs Assessment in the near future.

Traumatic Brain Injury Council – Shannon Cook:

There was a meeting in May, Dr. Ethrington showed them WHODAS 2.0 a new assessment for seeking coverage through Medicaid. They discussed new legislation that was recently passed. There are two vacancies on the board.

Committee on Aging – Royce Schultze: The council did not meet.

Olmstead Commission – Scott Burlingame:

They are working on the Olmstead plan, and they have several working groups (housing, employment, transportation, community, etc.).

Public Comments – Beth Larson-Steckler

Beth with Pathfinders suggested to have Medicaid come in. The Committee of Communication (COC) would be a good opportunity to sit on the committee. She wanted to remind people that people with chronic illness are individuals with disabilities and are worried about them falling through the cracks.

The next SILC meeting will be November 4-5, 2021, in Minot, ND and virtual.

Nancy Lundon made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Drew Hanson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

OPTIONS ND SILC REPORT – August 2021

Home Modifications/Evaluations/Technical Assistance:

- Assisted 8 individuals with home or apartment accessibility design needs; such as ramps, bathroom updates with potential lists of funding mechanisms, entities that can do the work.
- Provided technical assistance to city of McVie on how to update accessible parking spaces by its City Hall.
- Completed an accessibility survey for a bowling alley in New Rockford.
- Completed an accessibility survey for Nelson County Arts Council building in Pekin.
- Provided technical assistance to an organization serving Pembina County on how to develop policies related to service animal and emotional support animals.
- Participated in a long-range planning and development plan for city of Grand Forks planned expansion to discuss accessibility issues such as accessible sidewalks and public rights of way.

COVID Groups/Trainings:

- Develop and hosted a half hour weekly Disability Rights chat on Facebook Live starting March 23, 2021, through the end of June 2021. Meetings are on Tuesdays at 11 a.m. and approximately 20 to 30 people viewing each session. Temporarily discontinued during the summer.
- Host a once weekly call in or web-based chat for people with disabilities in our region started in June 2020.
- Provided virtual training on Service and Emotional Support Animals for ND SILC members.

COVID Emergency Kits:

- Options has distributed 208 emergency kits to p/w/d within our ND service area. The kits consisted of a blanket, emergency food, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizers, soap, cleaning supplies, towel and wash cloths, automatic thermometer, oximeter, mug with straw, flashlight, paper towels, Kleenexes, toilet paper, Red Cross emergency field first aid kit, hygiene kit, and emergency preparedness guide. Options gave additional kits to Spirit Lake Reservation in ND so they could distribute to their members.

Relocations and Diversions:

- ND has 27 relocations since October 2020. Eleven are MFP and 15 are ADRL and one regular grant. This is the highest numbers in Options history and counting!
- ND has two diversions.

New Staff:

- Options hired an additional MFP staff Miranda Nechepurenko in May.
- Options rehired Heather Everson as Advocate/Trainer after one year absence. She had previously taken a teaching job but missed Independent Living.

Dakota CIL Directors Report – August 2021

MFP/ADRL

Hired transition coordinator

Transitions-7, in progress-8, and non-consumers-18

CARES

Finished a ramp and dispersed PPE to McClean County.

Agency

Mind Matters Conference. 168 attended, 87 in person and 79 virtual.

ADA activity we baked and delivered cookies to tv and radio stations and businesses that have supported us and talked IL services and the ADA.

YESS members along with staff did computer training at the Bismarck Senior Center. We held our 3rd annual health fair, "Healthier You." at the Mandan Senior Center. The vendors gave info on sun care and healthy eating, different scams and what to do, blood pressure and free Covid shots, in-home care, physical therapy, and hospice care, we set up the AT booth and Informational table about services provided.

Invited to sit in on the Aging in Place and Home Modification work group. The group would like to get marketing and awareness materials on home modifications and aging in place and collecting local home modification stories.

The group wants to put together a Toolkit including video and written testimonials, photo library. Handouts-funding flowchart, factors that impact the cost of home modifications, communication tip sheets when talking with builders

Technical Assistance

Rural Development assessments

Service counter and changing room for store opening in Kirkwood Mall and

Bathroom stall for Linton City Hall

City of Lincoln redoing accessible parking

Trainings

Staff attended a webinar called: "Flipping the Script: A Homeless Teach-In for Health Care Workers." It was presented by Neighbors Together out of New York. Four individuals who had "lived experience" with homelessness presented their views on how they were treated in health care, social service, and human service agencies and facilities.

Attended Human Trafficking Conference hosted by the Children's Advocacy Center.

Staff have been doing virtual housing trainings with MFP Housing and High Plains Fair Housing. Topics included Service Animals, Rights and Responsibilities for Renters, Leases and Evictions.

Outreach

Staff went Golden Valley County (Beach), Billings County (Medora), and Stark County (Belfield/South Heart), businesses and agencies to provide information on DCIL services and leave brochures and informational flyers for customers to take.

Bowman High School to present to the Transition students about DCIL Services and an art project was also provided. The Bowman library, social services, city hall were also contacted and DCIL services presented, and brochures handed out.

AT presentation In McClean County

Virtual Landlord/Service Provider Training Sessions sponsored by the MFP Housing Program. June 1, 8, 15,22, and 29. Sessions included: Eviction Moratorium, HUD Criminal Guidance, Avoiding Work Burn Out, Part 2 Refugee Settlement in ND, and Personal Safety.

Staff attending Chamber events and talking about services.

North Dakota SILC Directors Report (8/5/21)
Scott Burlingame, Executive Director Independence, Inc.

Office News

Our new office move and rebuild is about 95% done. We are still waiting on the doors and the new workstations. We are hopping by the end of the month we will be all done.

We will host an open house on Sept. 15th from 11-2 for anybody that would like to join us. We will be having a Chamber-CDC Ribbon cutting at that time and awarding our Advocate and Youth Advocate of year that day.

We have a new staff that started on 7/1. His name is Micah Olson. Micah is as an Independent Living Advocate who will primarily work with consumers funded by core IL funding. Micah is originally from St. Paul but has family here in Minot. He has a law degree from Mitchell Hamline School of Law. His most recent employment was as an Assistant State's Attorney with the Ward County State's Attorney's Office.

We have two positions open at this time, an IL Advocate to work primarily with MFP, and an IL Specialist that will work in the schools as well as with adults with various types of needs. We have struggled tremendously to fill these jobs.

The combination of our recent move and a lack of stable workspaces, open positions, increased workload regarding transitions services, and normal summer vacations have put a lot of stress on our staff.

On 11th of Sept., we are hosting a fundraiser called "The Building Dreams Gala." The event will include a keynote speaker Lindsay Guentzel. Lindsay is a writer and television/radio personality who has covered everything from breaking news and politics to food and the Minnesota Twins.

Her work has appeared on ESPN, FOX Sports, The New York Times, CBS Radio, and on local networks like WCCO Radio and KARE-11. She is currently a producer for MPR and hosts an online food show.

A vocal advocate for mental health resources and awareness, Lindsay has openly shared her journey through depression and anxiety. Most recently, Guentzel has shared her later-in-life ADHD diagnosis and the effects it has had on her both personally and professionally.

Individual Services

Services funded through the Money Follows the Person program and the COVID related funds for ADRL are still taking a lot of our time. We have been able to increase our numbers significantly in regards to transitions and preventions. We have also helped

people keep out of places like DV Shelters, Homeless Shelters, and other rehab type places.

We also have used our CARES Act funding to help prevent people who are at the risk of moving into a higher risk environment from doing so. This has included covering peoples rent when they may have fallen behind or helping with other living expense.

We are expecting a significant decrease in the number of people we serve this year. With the shortage of staff, and the increased number of consumers that are more time consuming, this is to be expected.

We have set a goal of being able to provide all consumer services paper free by 10/1. Our hope is that will also help with efficiency, reduce mistakes, and save costs. Obviously electronic formats will not work for everybody, but we want to find a way to make it work for those whom it will work for.

Community Services

We received \$17,000 from ACL for Vaccine related support. So far, we have used that mostly to provide information to the public to combat misinformation campaigns. As you would expect in today's world, that has led to us getting some hate mail.

Since 2014 I have been advocating for a family homeless shelter in Minot. The City was able secure around \$4 million to fund it as part of a larger HUD resiliency grant after the flood. Unfortunately, at the time it was approved, no local nonprofit was willing to step up and save it. Eventually, LSS of North Dakota agreed to do so, and began the process. When LSS of North Dakota went bankrupt, the future was again up in the air.

This time, the former YWCA, now known as Project BEE stepped up and agreed to run it. They have talked about how between 80-85% of the people they serve identify as having some sort of disability. They have pledged to support efforts to make sure the whole shelter is ADA Accessible.

The Minot City Hall will soon be moving into a new building in downtown Minot. For a while now, our IL Ambassadors have identified having one accessible and available restroom on each downtown city block as a goal to increase the usage of that area. We feel the City Hall is a great place to start that.

The good news is the most recent plans for the City Hall does include such a restroom.

The City of Minot has for years had an accessible taxi ordinance. However, the sad fact is very few people with disabilities ever took advantage of it. That made the taxi companies get lazy. Now we have a board member who has been using it, and it has not been pretty. After going to a concert at the fair, he was forced to wait outside from 2 am until 8 am when Souris Valley Public Transportation could pick him up.

We are currently working this advocacy issue to get it fixed.

Freedom Resource Center Director's Report

August 2021

Six new board members were voted in last week:

- Tom Cassady, AFLAC Regional Sales Coordinator
- Tanya Stoll, MN Vocational Rehabilitation
- Abbey Krogstad, Wanzek Construction HR
- Milton Ota
- Draisey Wilson, Consumer
- Richard Ovind, former Peer Mentor

Jamestown Virtual FIA was held with County Extension Services, participants made Beef Confetti Taco Salad.

June & July:

- 3 MFP transitions/3 ADRL transitions.
- 3 ADRL in progress; 6 MFP in progress

Lisbon In person FIA was held in June and a patriotic picture was made.

Fargo

- Decluttering IL Skills class completed the end of June.
- FIA was held at a local park for Art in the Park, it was well received, and people asked for it to be an annual event.
- FIA for July was Red Hawks game last Wednesday evening.

June & July:

- 1 ADRL transition since last report; 13 in progress
- 4 MFP transitions since last report; 6 in progress

Jerry Christiansen provided community education about assistance animals to landlords, tenants and service providers in June.

Trollwood Performing Arts reached out to our Center-12 tickets were donated to FRC for consumers to attend.

The IL Advocate hired to work MFP in Fargo resigned last week. We are hiring for that position.

Continue to provide CARES money assistance to consumers with technology, utilities, and other items.

Our annual award event will be held in person and online on October 28.